

Strategic Plan Summary

Eastern State closed in 1971 with no clear reuse for the landmark site. When the City of Philadelphia threatened sale of the property in 1987, the historic preservation community formed an ad-hoc committee to lobby for the site's preservation. As a result, the City and the committee entered into a multi-year process of strategic planning. By 1994 when the site opened for tours, a long-range plan to preserve and develop the Penitentiary as an interpreted historic site was underway. Specifically this plan outlined costs needed to stabilize the structures, and to develop and operate interpretive programming.

The ad-hoc committee incorporated into Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc. in 1999, and continued to operate according to the established long-range plan. In 2001, the Directors engaged a consultant, Lee Daney of Fund Raising Council, Inc., to help expand the number and capacity of the Board membership. He also updated and produced *Eastern State Penitentiary: A Case for Support*, which presented the long-range plan in a concise booklet, which is still used extensively as a promotional and fund raising document.

This past year, after working together as a Board for two years, the Directors engaged Mr. Daney again. This time the whole organization (Directors, committees and staff) worked with Mr. Daney through a series of five workshops to evaluate the long-range plan outlined in the *Case for Support* and formulated a three-year Strategic Plan. During the last workshop, we discussed using the strategic plan to measure organization-wide accountability - to be reported at each of our five annual Board Meetings.

The Strategic Plan for January 1, 2004 - December 31, 2006 is organized in sections of Financial Management, Capital Improvements, Audience Development and Marketing, Programming, Staffing, and Board Development and Governance.

Project Goal- Expanding Educational Services: New Programming for School Groups

1. Project Design

Since opening the Penitentiary for guided tours in 1994, our programming has been developed for general audiences. Through careful selection and extensive training of tour guides, we have also catered to the special characteristics and needs of specific audiences, including school-aged groups. Our current focus on school groups has led to an increase in that audience (up to 20%), and a Board-led commitment to expand the capacity of the staff to include professional museum educator.

We began by conducting a professional evaluation of our current programming. In 2002 we held two, day and a half "education summits," convening two groups professional educators to travel to Philadelphia to visit the site, experience the tours and exhibits and to engage in facilitated discussion with the staff and Directors. Their professional recommendations set forth a three-year outline for school-aged programming, as found in the accompanying report, *(A Report on the Conclusions and Recommendations on the "School-Age Education Summits.")* as well as a list of the participants. In 2003 the Board of Director's Program Committee began its work to incorporate these recommendations into its strategic plan. The Program Committee's strategic plan was reviewed and included in the organization's overall strategic plan in November of 2003.

To achieve this new initiative, the Directors and staff seek to expand the capacity of the organization. During 2004 we will secure the funding to hire a professional museum educator. Our Museum Educator will work under the direction of the Program Director to develop and implement new programming for the next three-year period (2004 - 2007). Specifically the Museum Educator will:

- Envision and design the goals of the education program.
- Design education materials, including tour content, exhibits, curriculum materials for school groups.
- Develop, oversee and evaluate new tour programs.
- Train and motivate tour guides and volunteers to work with young audiences.
- Recruit, support and work with advisory groups (comprised of museum educators and teachers)
- Develop and implement program evaluations.
- Identify and cultivate new audiences through marketing to regional schools and beyond.
- Contribute to the development of materials for fund raising activities that will help sustain the position.

2. Grant Program Goals: Supporting Lifelong Learning

We will introduce school-age children to the fascinating history of this National Historic Landmark and make their visit meaningful, thought-provoking and memorable. Building on the recommendations of the Education Summit professionals, we will craft programming to dramatically increase our standards in working with school groups. The new professional educational staff will also help us develop programming for families visiting during normal public hours.

Eastern State Penitentiary - A Description of an American Treasure

Eastern State was the world's first true *penitentiary*, a building designed to leave an inmate *penitent*, truly remorseful. The architect and building committee were swayed by Quaker beliefs in the innate good nature

of the human spirit, and believed that severe isolation would leave the convict introspective and ashamed. The massive Eastern State Penitentiary opened in 1829. Its original floor plan by architect John Haviland is still remarkably intact. It had seven cell blocks radiating from a central surveillance point. Each cell had an individual exercise yard and skylight. The building featured running water and central heat before the White House.

Although Haviland's "gloomy fortress" was intentionally designed to intimidate--with its massive Gothic Revival exterior and lonely hilltop location--it gives way to an interior that more closely resembles a church. The forty-foot, barrel-vaulted corridors are open and surprisingly bright; the skylit cells resemble small chapels. The design was called "the Pennsylvania System," and served as the model for more than 250 prisons on five continents. Virtually every prison built in the 19th century is modeled after either Eastern State or Sing Sing.

By the late 1860s, major alterations began in response to an increasing prison population, and the Pennsylvania System was finally abandoned in 1913. Prison administrators continued to add to the complex, however, building a patchwork of cellblocks representing 150 years of prison design. The final cellblock was added in 1959, a modern prison wing with electronic door locks that housed inmates awaiting execution. The "noble experiment" in prison reformation was over.

Eastern State Penitentiary closed in 1971, after 142 years of consecutive use. It had virtually no maintenance until 1998. The artifact that remains--with its Grumbling, barrel-vaulted cells and 1,000 skylights--is a place of haunting, eerie beauty.

How We Interpret this Landmark: Our Education Mission

Programming and Interpretation

We believe that Eastern State is the best place in America to interpret the history of American prisons. We use the architecture of the Penitentiary to illustrate the institution's history, and changing ideas and attitudes in American corrections. Our interpretive program includes tours, exhibits and special events.

Our programming is based on the belief that the prison reformers who built Eastern State Penitentiary did not have the answers to prison reform, but that their spirit of optimism - their assumption that prisons can be improved -- is noteworthy. While ESPHS, Inc. as an organization does not advocate a specific solution for the centuries - old dilemma of crime and justice, we believe that the issues addressed with this building have never been resolved, and remain of central importance to our nation. We hope that visitors leave the site realizing that these issues remain both complicated and important to our society.

School groups have discovered that the Penitentiary as a unique cultural attraction, and this audience has steadily grown. This past year historic site tours drew 48,000. School groups constituted 7,500 of the visitors.

Audio Tours

For the 2003 season we partnered with New-York based Acoustiguide, Inc. to introduce a new state-of-the-art audio tour, *Voices of Eastern State*. It is based on the award-winning program at Alcatraz. Narrated by actor Steve Buscemi (*Fargo*, *Armageddon*), the audio tour incorporates the real voices of twenty-eight former inmates and staff. It recreates the bustle of crowded corridors, here in the cellblocks of this long-silent building.

The tour ends on the baseball diamond, as visitors learn about the site's future. From there, visitors can visit twenty-three additional points of interest throughout the site. Each additional stop has an illustrated sign and several minutes of content on the audio equipment. Additional stops include Al Capone's cell, Death Row, the

kitchens, sports and the synagogue.

In its first year, the audio tour has brought significant improvements to the audience experience. It has also allowed us to double the number of days the site is open to the public, allowed more flexibility in hiring seasonal tour guides, dramatically expanded the audience and has been the focus of a national marketing campaign. In preparation for this, but, we stabilized the tour route -completely eliminating the need for hard hats for the first time since we opened in 1994 - and opened several dramatic vistas in the Penitentiary's cellblocks and yards.

Guided Tours

The audio tour is included in with standard admission to Eastern State. We also offer special half-hour "Topic Tours", during which the guide staff discusses specific topics such as *Escapes* or *Current Prison Issues*.

For pre-arranged group tours, we offer several guided tour including a 19th Century Tour, focusing on the *Pennsylvania System* and the early decades of the Penitentiary's history. We also offer a 20th Century Tour illustrating later additions to the building complex, changes in the operation of the Penitentiary, and conditions in modern prisons. We also cater to the special requests and interests of specific groups such as architecture and criminology students.

Historical Exhibits

We utilize several spaces, including actual cellblocks, for historical exhibits and artist installations. We seek a variety of exhibitions during each tour season, believing the Penitentiary is best interpreted with a mix of traditional museum installations coupled with exhibitions by artists reacting to the inspiration of the Penitentiary.

For the 2003 season year we continued our most ambitious historical exhibit to date, *Building History: Recently Donated Objects*, built entirely around our growing collection of artifacts related to Eastern State Penitentiary. The exhibit provides the opportunity to present images, photographs, video and artifacts on display within the context of the building. It also introduces the public to how and why the collection has evolved, and helps to acknowledge the many donors who have generously helped us to expand the collection.

Artists' Installations

Site-specific artists' installations are juried annually by the Board's Artist Review Committee, a group of artists, curators and educators. Five artists will exhibit for the 2004 season.

Current Tours for School-groups

School groups of all ages tour the penitentiary with guides who are trained to work with kids. The tour route is nearly the same as for adults, but the tours emphasize role-playing, interactive activity, and broad, thematic discussions.

3. Project's Fit with Organization Mission and Strategic Plan

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc Mission and Strategic Plan:

Expanding our educational programming for school-aged groups achieves the section of our mission **to make the Penitentiary accessible to the public...**

Our Strategic Plan addresses this section of the mission under:

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

GOAL 1: Continue to expand visitor attendance by increasing audiences in key visitor categories.

Objectives:

1. Continue to identify and analyze both current and potential audiences in Eastern State's primary visitor categories to determine areas for growth.

Action Steps

- a. Analyze Eastern State's audience categories of:
 - * school age visitors and teachers
 - * tour groups;
 - * walk-ins;
 - * event attendees.

Responsibility: Program Director, Museum Educator, Consultant, Staff

Timeline for Implementation: Second Quarter 2004 - Second Quarter 2005

In addition, implementation of this project addresses the section of the mission statement **to explain and interpret its {the penitentiary's} complex history...**

Our Strategic Plan addresses this section of the mission under:

PROGRAMMING:

GOAL 2: Continue to enhance and improve the experience of group tours.

Objectives:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive museum education program for school age children.

Responsibility: Museum Educator, Program Director, Program Committee, Staff

Timeline for Implementation: Fourth Quarter 2004 - Fourth Quarter 2005

2. Hire a Museum Educator develop the plan. (See Staffing.)

Responsibility: Program Director

Timeline for Implementation: Fourth Quarter 2004 - First Quartet 2005

3. Convene the Museum Education Advisory Committee to review the proposed program.

Responsibility: Museum Educator, Program Director

Timeline for Implementation: Fourth Quarter 2004 - First Quartet 2005

Investing in the capacity of the organization supports both sections of the mission.

Our Strategic Plan addresses this aspect of the project under:

STAFFING

GOAL 1: Continue efforts to secure the earned or unearned funding necessary to hire in the following priority order additional staff to further the development of the project.

Objectives:

2. Hire a Museum Educator (follows the hiring of the Site Manager)

Action Steps

- a. Decide / proceed predicated on fund raising success

Responsibility: Program Director

Timeline for Implementation: Fourth Quarter 2004 - Fourth Quarter 2005

(We have addressed strategic planning for education programming in IMLS Section 5)

The impact of this project beyond IMLS Funding:

Achieving this project of developing new programming for school age children will have the following impact:

- Compelling programming for children that is meaningful, thought-provoking and memorable.
- Audience expansion which will help support the Museum Educator position.
- Increased capacity of the professional staff

All of these will signal ongoing success on the part of the organization, which will lead to greater support from donors and funders.

4. Strategic Plan: Process and Financial

Strategic Planning Process

A series of planning studies conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s-before the tour program began-provided the basis for long-term planning. In 1999 the leadership of ESPHS, Inc. used these planning documents, along with our experience in operation the site and monthly visitor surveys, to develop a Five-Year Plan. It outlines the steps necessary to raise Eastern State to a cultural attraction with a national profile. Described in *Eastern State Penitentiary: A Case for Support*, the plan focuses on capital improvements, educational and interpretative program development, building an audience and expanding the organization.

In 2003 the Directors, Committees and staff worked with Lee Daney, of Fund Raising Counsel to turn this plan into a three-year strategic plan that could be used to outline specific goals, determine responsibility for completion and measure the outcomes. *The Strategic Plan for Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc.: January 1, 2004 - December 31 006* was approved at the December 2003 Board Meeting.

Financial Resources

Since 1989 we have raised nearly \$4,500,000 for the preservation and development of the site. This past year we began our fourth roofing project, the \$1,000,000 Save America's Treasures project to restore roofs over the central Rotunda and the passageways that link it to each of the original seven cell blocks. It is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2003. Fund raising continues for the next phase of roofing stabilization and selective restoration, as adopted in our Strategic Plan. Our approach to capital improvements is efficient and cost effective. We are stabilizing a semi-ruin, and plan to restore only those places that have interpretive value.

We have also been successful raising operating and capital support through our annual Halloween fund raising event. With the exception of 2001, which was affected by the events of September 11, gate receipts for that event had steadily grown. This past year we broke previous audience records, with our gross income exceeding \$1,000,000. Halloween underwrites projects that are otherwise difficult to fund. For example, proceeds from the 2003 event will allow us to invest nearly \$100,000 in critical electrical service upgrade that is required to meet Philadelphia Building Code, fund a new \$35,000 full-time Site Manager, heat and air-conditioned staff offices at the site, and provide matching funds for three grants. Once seen as a deviation of our mission, Halloween has proven to be an extremely popular event that raises a valuable source of income and introduces tens of thousands of visitors to a site that might not attract them as an historic site. This year Halloween attendance jumped 50% to 60,000. Halloween also draws significant attention to the site. Our busiest days for historic tours occur on weekends following the Halloween event. The event also attracts film scouts. By the close of 2003, we raised \$31,000 from site rental, which included the filming of the *Emeril Live* Halloween special.

5. Appropriateness of Project for Institution

School groups constitute 20% of our overall visitors for historic tours. We have been able to do very little over the past ten years to expand this audience or program specifically for them. Hiring a Museum Educator and programming specifically for this audience is our highest current priority.

Strategic Planning Process for new Programming for School-Aged Children

Our two Education Summits provided the recommendation to add a Museum Educator, a draft job description, and a draft of a three-year education program. When we began the process of evaluating our education programming, we chose not to hire a single consultant to lead us through a strategic planning process. Rather, we sought the advice of a number of professionals. We believed that gathering them together could capture their attention and produce expanded results, and that discussion among a group of professionals would improve the outcome. These meetings far exceeded our expectations.

We began planning the Summit by seeking the advice of several local educators, including Jean Pond, a consultant, Danielle Rice of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Bill Adair of the Rosenbach Museum and Library, and Beth Twiss-Garritty of the National Constitution Center. Each critiqued the agenda and helped recommend colleagues they thought would offer valuable contributions.

We sought a wide variety of classroom and museum educators from throughout the region. We also invited several educators from international prison museums, as well as others from equally sensitive sites, such as the National Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Lower East Side Tenement Museum. We were particularly interested in other programs that interpret complex and complicated social history issues. We also achieved participation from local teachers that had brought their students on class trips.

The summit consisted of two sets of sessions, one June 13th and 14th and the other June 20th and 21st held at the site and at meeting rooms nearby. Both sessions were facilitated by Lee Daney of Fund Raising Counsel, Inc., and funded by the Heritage Investment Program of the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Marcus Family Fund and the Samuel S. Fels Fund.

Sean Kelley, Program Director gave the groups a tour of the prison as if they were a fifth grader on a class trip. The discussion, back at the meeting room, critiqued the strong and weak points of the tour from a kid's perspective. This led to a discussion of strategies to make the tour more compelling, thought-provoking, extensive, and meaningful for school-aged students.

Topics focused on ways tours could be more engaging and interactive and included:

- Ideas for visuals, activities, "Hands-on" items and themes, The role of educational standards in the tour
- The need for and effectiveness of pre and post visit materials
- Curriculum guides - yes or no?
- Teacher focus group and/ or advisory board to help develop tour content, and
- The role of the web site in preparing school groups for their visit to the site.

The next day the discussion revolved around the following topics:

- The appropriateness of an audio tour for school groups,
- How to marry the mission of the historic site with the items sold in the gift shop,
- The development of a museum educator position at the site and the description and role of such a person

- The evaluation of the effectiveness of a school group tour,
- Ways to market the historic site to teachers, and
- Universal themes of a prison museum, which of these themes are appropriate for children and how they can be related to the child's own experience.

Their contribution of the Education Summits to the design our next two years will be critical. Participants suggested the qualifications and salary of our first Museum Educator. They outlined critical improvements and dissuaded us from pitfalls. They also encouraged constant evaluation and the formation of an Advisory Committee of teachers and other educators to help achieve appropriate and effective methods for Eastern State.

Mr. Daney summarized the topics and the resulting discussion in his report, "*A Report on the Conclusions and Recommendations of the School-Age Education Summits.*" These suggestions were reviewed by the Program Committee and approved in the Strategic Plan.

6. Project - Resources: Time & Budget

We--the Board, Program Committee and staff--believe that our highest current priority is to undertake a project to develop new programming for school groups, and that the goals are realistic and achievable. The new Museum Educator will join a team of three full-time staff members that are already committed to the goals outlined in our mission and strategic plan.

We have also designed the budget to reflect our ability to fund the position for the first two years. In addition to this position, we intend to add a Development Director to the staff during the next year who will help to sustain the position.

7. Project Resources: Personnel and Technology

Program Director, Sean Kelley will supervise the Museum Educator

He has worked in museum education for twelve years. While in the Education Department of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Mr. Kelley designed a series of lesson plans around the museum's temporary exhibits, and led discussions among school groups visiting the museum. He also developed a series of classroom materials--including a still popular poster and lesson plan for the museum's Romanesque Recumbent Knight--and consulted on family activities designed for the museum's permanent collection. After joining Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site in 1995, Mr. Kelley convened the organization's first Education Advisor Committee, and has overseen the development the site's tour program and all of its interpretive materials to date.

Under Mr. Kelley's guidance, the school tour program has grown from 1,000 students in 1995 to 7,500 students in 2003. He has overseen the development of an ambitious guide training and evaluation program, and continues to evaluate every member of the seasonal guide staff.

He has overseen the development of all the historic site exhibits, including *ALONE: Use of Isolation in American Prisons, 1790 to Present* (1998), and *Building History. Recently Donated Objects and Images* (2000). In 2003, Mr. Kelley completed the critically acclaimed *Voices of Eastern State* audio tour, which recreates many of the sounds of the active prison and incorporates the real voices of 28 former inmates and officers. Twenty-four thousand people have taken the tour to date. His seat on the Board of the Philadelphia Museum Council As shown in the excerpts from the Strategic Plan, hiring a museum educator and developing school trip programming is his next priority.

Budget Justification

Museum Educator Salary –

We will seek an educator with five years experience to join our staff. We will depend on an educator to work independently and bring creativity and skill to the job. *This salary is commensurate with the experience recommend by the participants in the Education Summit.*

Fringe Benefits -

Fringe benefits include a retirement plan (SEP - TDA), medical insurance, life and disability insurance, twelve holidays and three weeks vacation (we are closed the week between Christmas and New Years Day).

Program Director Salary/Program Coordinator Salary

Both Sean Kelley, the Program Director, and Brett Bertolino, the Program Coordinator, will contribute staff time to this project. Mr. Kelley will supervise the Museum Educator as well as assisting with the development of the long-and short-range goals. Mr. Bertolino currently oversees the Site Manager and tour guides, and coordinates all of the group tour reservations. He will provide orientation to the Museum Educator, as well as contributing his experience at Eastern State toward new programming for school groups.

Computer/Software

We will provide a new i-Mac with basic Microsoft Office software. The office already has a network that shares files, internet access and e-mail. This estimate comes from the MacConnect equipment magazine.

Phone, Desk and Chair

We have an existing Lucent telephone system and we will purchase a new set, with a fixed price of \$900. We will also need another desk and chair, estimated at \$350.

Miscellaneous Supplies

Based on our existing office use, we have projected \$500 per year for office supplies.

Marketing Materials

For the first few years, we intend to produce marketing materials in-house, with which we have become very proficient. As the Museum Educator develops new programming, we will develop a marketing plan that includes appropriate and effective materials. These costs are based on our experience with in-house products. Should these materials be needed earlier, we will allocate or fund raise additional support.

Exhibit materials

As with exhibit materials, we anticipate that these will be developed for full product in the years beyond this project schedule. Should these materials be needed earlier, we will allocate or fund raise additional support.